METERS IN SLOKAS.

Aim of this document is to explain the structure of meters and how to identify them in Slokas.

FIRST WE DISCUSS SYLLABLE BASED METERS. THEY ARE CALLED VARNA-VRUTHTHAMS. HERE THE BASIS IS NUMBER OF SYLLABLES PRESENT IN ONE PAADAM (LINE) OF A SLOKA.

1. VOWELS are two types. They are SHORT vowels and LONG vowels.

2a. SHORT Vowels are अ,इ, उ, ऋ 2b. LONG Vowels are आ, ई, ऊ, ए, ऐ, ओ, ओ, अ, अः ।

3. Vowels are complete syllables. Basic consonants like क्, र् etc become complete syllable when merged with vowels only. Example. क+अ=क

4. Basic consonants like क् र् etc are not counted as syllables.

5. FIRST STEP in meter construction or identification is to know which is a GURU syllable and which is a LAGHU Syllable.

6. GURU

6a. Any long vowel independent or merged with basic consonant is GURU

6b. In Devanagari script anuswaram (syllable with dot on top) is GURU.

6c. Syllable with visargam (:) is GURU.

6d. In any slokam, ending syllable of every पाद is GURU. (Even short syllable at the end is guru).

6e. After a short syllable if a jodaksharam comes, then the short syllable is GURU.

6f. NOTE. Short jodaksharam is not GURU

7. LAGHU.
After an internal short syllable , if there is no jodaksharam, then that short syllable is LAGHU.

8. LAGHU AND GURU ARE THE SWARAMS IN POETRY.

9. NAMES OF EIGHT GANAMS.

Eight ganams are ---> य, र, त, भ, ज, स, न, म. Byheart now itself
य, र, त, भ, ज, स, न, म.

10. EXPLANATION OF GANAMS.

10a. One ganam is a set of three members formed with Laghu and Guru.

य गण is LGG ie aadi laghu and two gurus

र गण is GLG ie madhyama laghu and two gurus.

त गण is GGL ie anthima laghu and two gurus.

भ गण is GLL ie aadi guru and two laghus.

ज गण is LGL ie madhyama guru and two laghus.

स गण is LLG ie anthima guru and two laghus.

न गण is LLL ie sarva laghu.

म गण is GGG ie sarva guru.

11. HOW TO IDENTIFY THE METER OF A SLOKA?

Step1. Count the number of syllables in the first paadam (line) of a four line sloka. (If it is 10 or 11 or 12 then, count the syllables in the second paadam (line) also)

Step2. Make sets of three syllables (one or two sets enough.)

Step3. Obtain and write down the names of ganams (य, र, त, भ, ज, स, न, म.) for each set and count number of Laghus or Gurus of extra syllables after the sets.

Step4. Now refer the Vruththa lakshanam table below to get the name of the meter. That is all.

12. VRUTHTHA LAKSHANAM TABLE.

8 Syllables--->ANUSHTUB (In print , you may see 8+8= 16 syllables in one line) 13,14,15, will be LGL always. This is for information only.

10/11 Syllables--->SA,SA,JA,GU and SA,BHA,RA,LA,GU ---> VIYOGINI.

11 SYLLABLES ---> TA, TA, JA, GU, GU--->INDRA VAJRA.

11 SYLLABLES ---> JA, TA, JA, GU, GU--->UPENDRA VAJRA.

11 SYLLABLES---> MIX OF INDRA VAJRA and UPENDRA VAJRA --->UPAJATI of 11.

11 SYLLABLES--->RA,NA,RA,LA,GU---> RADHODDHADA (रथोद्धत).

11 SYLLABLES---> RA,NA,BHA,GU,GU---> SWAGATA.

11 SYLLABLES---> MA,TA,TA,GU,GU--->SHALINI.

11 SYLLABLES---> NA,RA,RA,LA,GU---> SAMMADA.

11 SYLLABLES---> NA,NA,BHA, GU,GU--->PRIDHVI.

11 SYLLABLES---> BHA,BHA,BHA,GU,GU---> CHARANA GEETAM. Example. Devi Mahatmyam, Chapter 11.

11/12 SYLLABLES---> SA,SA,GA, GU,GU and SA,BHA,RA,YA---> VASANTA MAALIKA.

12 SYLLABLES---> JA,TA,JA,RA---> VAMSASTAM.

12 SYLLABLES--->TA,TA,JA,RA---> INDRA VAMSA.

12 SYLLABLES---> MIX OF VAMSASTAM and INDRA VAMSA ---> UPAJATI OF 12.

12 SYLLABLES---> NA,BHA,BHA,RA---> DRUTAVILAMBITAM.

12 SYLLABLES---> SA,SA,SA,SA---> TOTAKAM.

12 SYLLABLES---> YA,YA,YA,YA---> BHUJANGA PRAYAATAM.

12 SYLLABLES--->MA,MA,YA,YA VAISWA DEVEE. (VR, Sundara kandam 63.29).

12 SYLLABLES SA,JA,SA,SA PRAMITAKSHARA (Sri Rama panchasati Dasakam 17).

12 /13 SYLLABLES---> NA,NA,RA,YA and NA,JA,JA,RA,GU---> PUSHPITAAGRA.

13 SYLLABLES---> MA,NA,JA,RA,GU---> PRAHARSHINI.

13 SYLLABLES--->SA,JA,SA,JA,GU---> MANJUBHASHINI.

13 SYLLABLES--->JA,BHA,SA,JA,G---> ATIRUCHIRA.

13 SYLLABLES--->MA,TA, YA, SA,GU--->MATHTHA-MAYOORAM. (Srirama panchasati dasakam 20).

14 SYLLABLES---> BHA,JA,SA,NA,GU,GU---> INDUVADANA. (Example Tatvamasi pancharatnam).

14 SYLLABLES---> TA,BHA,JA,JA,GU,GU---> VASANTATILAKAM.

15 SYLLABLES---> NA,NA,MA,YA,YA ---> MALINI.

16 SYLLABLES --->JA,RA,JA,RA,JA,GU ---> PANCHA- CHAMARAM (Siva tanadavam, ganesha pancha ratnam).

17 SYLLABLES----> YA,MA,NA,SA,BHA,LA,GU---> SHIKHARINI.

17 SYLLABLES---> MA,BHA,NA,TA,TA,GU,GU---> MANDAKRANTA.

17 SYLLABLES--->NA,SA,MA,RA,SA,LA,GU---> HARINI.

17 SYLLABLES--->NA,JA,BHA,JA,JA,LA,GU---> NARKUDAKAM.
Example. Srimat Bhagavatam 10.87 (14 to41).

17 SYLLABLES--->JA,SA,JA,SA,YA,LA,GU---> PRITHVI.

18 SYLLABLES--->RA,SA,JA,JA,BHA,RA---> MALLIKA.

18 SYLLABLES--->SA,NA,JA, NA,BHA,SA----> SANKARA- CHARITAM. Example. Sivasankara stotram.

19 SYLLABLES---> MA,SA,JA,SA,TA,TA,GU---> SHARDOOLA VIKREEDITAM.

21 SYLLABLES--->MA,RA,BHA,NA,YA,YA,YA---> SRADDHARA.

21 SYLLABLES--->RA,NA,RA,NA,RA,NA,RA---> KUSUMA MANJARI.

23 SYLLABLES --->NA,JA,JA,JA,JA,JA,JA,LG,GU--->AIGIRINANDINI.

26 PLUS SYLLABLES --->(2 TIMES NA गणंs THEN MANY RA गणंs) THEN THE METER IS DANDAKAM. Example Syamala dadakam.

WE HAVE COMPLETED THE DISCUSSION OF VARNA VRUTHTHAMS.//

NOW WE DISCUSS METERS BASED ON THE NUMBER OF MATRAS IN ONE PAADAM OF A SLOKA. THESE METERS ARE KNOWN AS MAATRA- METERS OR MAATRA-VRUTHTHAMS.

NOTES ON चतर्मात्रा METERS.

1. VOWELS are two types. They are SHORT vowels and LONG vowels.

2a. SHORT Vowels are अ,इ, उ, ऋ

2b. LONG Vowels are आ, ई, ऊ, ए, ऐ, ओ, औ, अ, अः । Please note ए and ओ are long. There is no shorter version for them in Sanskrit language.

3. Vowels are complete syllables. Basic consonants like क, र् etc become complete syllable when merged with vowels only. Example. क+अ=क

4. Basic consonants like क, र् etc are not counted as syllables.

5. FIRST STEP in Matra Vruththam construction or identification is to know which is a GURU syllable and which is a LAGHU Syllable.

6. GURU.

6a. Any long vowel independent or merged with basic consonant is GURU.

6b. In Devanagari script anuswaram (syllable with dot on top) is GURU.

6c. Syllable with visargam (:) mark is GURU.

6d. In any slokam, ending syllable of every पाद is GURU. (Even short syllable at the end is guru).

6e. After a short syllable if a jodaksharam comes, then the short syllable is GURU. (LEARN NOW ITSELF).

6f. NOTE. Short jodaksharam is not GURU. It makes the letter prior to it as Guru.

7. LAGHU.

After an internal short syllable , if there is no jodaksharam, then that short syllable is LAGHU.

8. LAGHU AND GURU ARE VERY IMPORTANT IN Slokas.

SUBJECT OF MATRA VRUTHTHAMS.

01. The subject of matra vruththam is not difficult but needs concentration in the beginning for understanding. So take a pen and paper to write down what you are understanding.

02. FIRST OF ALL, WE SHOULD LEARN the following.

02a. LA=Laghu is a ONE-MATRA- SYLLABLE and GU= Guru is a TWO- MATRA SYLLABLE.

02b. We can make a set of four matras by the following combinations.

Four laghus ie. LA,LA,LA,LA=1+1+1+1= 4matras.

Two gurus ie GU,GU=2+2=4matras.

GU,LA,LA=2+1+1= 4matras.

LA,GU,LA=1+2+1=4matras.

LA,LA,GU=1+1+2=4matras.

03. While checking a sloka for VARNA-VRUTHTHAMS, If we are not getting a pattern, we should try to see if the sloka is in Matra Vruththam. For this we should learn the following first.

04. A Matra Vruththam will have 2 halves . They are called POORVARDHAM AND UTHTHARARTHTHAM.

05. USEFUL SHORT-FORMS

I am now giving below three SHORT-FORMS,namely D1, D2 and D3.

WHAT IS D1?

In one padam of a sloka, while locating sets of 4 matras, if we get 4-matra-sets continuously 7 times and then one GURU, we will write down that PAADAM as D1.
ie. 4-matra-sets 7 times+1 Guru=D1.

WHAT IS D2?

In one padam of a sloka, while locating sets of 4 matras, if we get 4-matra-sets continuously 5 times and then one LAGHU, then 4 matras, then one Guru, we will write down that PAADAM as D2.
ie. 4-matra-sets 5 times+one LAGHU, then 4 matras, then one Guru=D2. Here the 6th set is a one-man show. D2 is not difficult when working with one part of a sloka.

WHAT IS D3?

In one padam of a sloka, while locating sets of 4 matras, if we get 4-matra-sets continuously 8 times, we will write down that PAADAM as D3.
ie. 4-matra-sets 8 =D3.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE MATRA METER?

D1D1 IS GEETI.
D1D2 IS ARYA.
D2D1 IS UTH-GEETHI.
D2D2 IS UPA-GEETI.
D3D3 IS ARYA-GEETHI.
D1D3 IS UPA-JAATHI OF MATRA METER.

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